



Daily Report

Sub-Saharan Africa

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24 September 1991

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CONTENTS

24 September 1991

NOTICE TO READERS: An * indicates material not disseminated in electronic form.

CENTRAL AFRICA

Cameroon

Opposition Leader Arrested, Riot in Douala *[Paris International]* 1

Central African Republic

Former President Calls for Political Openness *[AFP]* 1

Congo

French Paratroops Reportedly Leave for Zaire *[AFP]* 1

Rwanda

First Round of Government-Opposition Talks Ends *[KNA]* 1

Zaire

Further on Kinshasa Violence, Spreads to Shaba 1
 Shots Heard at Kokolo Barracks *[AFP]* 1
 Order Restored at Airport 23 Sep *[Bukavu Radio]* 2
 Armed Forces Head: Order Restored *[AFP]* 2
 France Takes Measures *[Paris International]* 3
 'Systematic' Looting Continues 24 Sep *[AFP]* 3
 French Troops Take Over Airport *[AFP]* 3
 French Troops Head for Kinshasa *[AFP]* 4
 Clashes Reported in Shaba Region *[AFP]* 4
 Evacuation of Belgian Citizens Begins *[Brussels International]* 4

REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

French Minister: Lifting Sanctions To Begin *[Johannesburg Radio]* 5
 ANC's Mbeki Comments *[SAPA]* 5
 Finance Minister Announces VAT Concessions *[Johannesburg Radio]* 5
 Possible Trade Federation Boycott Over VAT *[Johannesburg Radio]* 6
 Salaried Staff Group Against Boycott *[Johannesburg Radio]* 6
 ANC Calls for Release of Political Prisoners *[SAPA]* 6
 ANC Military Wing To Be Future RSA Army *[Johannesburg Radio]* 6
 ANC Youth League Leader Found Dead in Soweto *[SAPA]* 7
 Two Incidents Reported in 23 Sep Unrest Report *[SAPA]* 7
 CP Member Beyers To Begin 14-Day Prison Term *[Johannesburg Radio]* 7
 Department Reacts to Union Call on School Closure *[SAPA]* 7
 24 Sep Press Review on Current Events, Issues *[THE CITIZEN, etc.]* 7

SOUTHERN AFRICA

Angola

Troops Move to Assembly Points in Benguela *[Luanda Radio]* 9
 Charge Soldiers Fired at ANGOP Vehicle Denied *[Voice of the Black Cockerel]* 9

UNITA Says Namibian Soldiers Infiltrate Namibe	[Voice of the Black Cockerel]	9
UNITA: Government Mobilizes People at Border	[Voice of the Black Cockerel]	9
UNITA Detains Alleged FAPLA Spy	[Voice of the Black Cockerel]	9
People Secure Catumbela Local Committee Building	[Voice of the Black Cockerel]	9

Malawi

President Discusses One-Party State at Convention	[KNA]	10
Opposition Head on Multiparty System Possibility	[London International]	10
Commentary Views Banda's Address to Convention	[Blantyre Radio]	11
Banda, Foreign Delegates Comment on Relations	[Blantyre Radio]	11

Mozambique

Renamo Reports Peace Talks To Resume in Rome	[Lisbon Radio]	12
Renamo Recaptures Lalaua City 19 Sep	[Maputo Radio]	12
President Chissano Departs for Germany 23 Sep	[Maputo Radio]	12

Swaziland

Reporting on Tinkhundla Review Sessions Banned	[THE TIMES OF SWAZILAND 24 Sep]	13
Paper Condemns Reporting Ban	[THE TIMES OF SWAZILAND 24 Sep]	13

Cameroon

Opposition Leader Arrested, Riot in Douala

LD2409000791 Paris Radio France International
in French 1830 GMT 23 Sep 91

[Excerpt] Rioting took place in Douala, Cameroon, today after a prodemocracy demonstration over the arrest of an opposition leader was forced to disperse. Police arrested Jean-Jacques Ekindi, secretary general of the opposition coordinating committee, and at least nine other people. [passage omitted]

Central African Republic

Former President Calls for Political Openness

AB2309171691 Paris AFP in French 1207 GMT
23 Sep 91

[Text] Bangui, 23 Sep (AFP)—Former CAR President David Dacko stated in Bangui "that the CAR is left with no other choice than to engage in total political openness and restore sovereignty to the people and to their elected assemblies."

At a news conference, the former head of state, who does not belong to any political group, further stated that "the CAR was, some 10 years back, a precursor in the condemnation of single parties, the march toward democracy, and the call for national conferences that have become commonplace today."

In 1980, a national seminar was organized in Bangui to debate the country's past and future.

Questioned about holding a national conference in his country, Mr. Dacko said "that consultations between the authorities, the trade unions, and leaders of the opposition (...) are necessary to resolve the crisis."

On his relationship with his successor, General Andre Kolingba, who came into power in 1981, Mr. Dacko said that the gates to the presidential palace had been closed to him since 1985.

Questioned about his financial resources, Mr. Dacko said that he has nothing anymore. "At first, the head of state, Gen. Kolingba, used to give me some money from his own pocket and later I was allocated an annuity, but for several years now, I have had nothing," he asserted.

Congo

French Paratroops Reportedly Leave for Zaire

AB2409091391 Paris AFP in English 0900 GMT
24 Sep 91

[Text] Brazzaville, Sep 24 (AFP)—About 100 French paratroops left Brazzaville Tuesday for Kinshasa to protect foreign nationals in the Zairian capital, an AFP correspondent in the Congolese capital reported. The

troops arrived overnight and left for Zaire aboard a civilian Congolese ferry boat. Kinshasa lies about 500 meters (yards) from Brazzaville across the Zaire (Congo) River.

Rwanda

First Round of Government-Opposition Talks Ends

EA2009125091 Nairobi KNA in English 0618 GMT
20 Sep 91

[Text] Kinshasa, 20 Sep (KNA/PANA)—The first round of negotiations between the Rwanda Government and the armed opposition, Rwandese Patriotic Front (FPR), ended in the Zairian town of Gbadolite Tuesday [17 September] after three days of exploratory talks under the mediation of President Mobutu Sese Seko, reports reaching PANA Thursday said.

In a press release, the two parties expressed their commitment to the Nsele cease-fire agreement of 29th March, which was amended by the mini-summit at Gbadolite on 16th September. That mini-summit decided to change the composition of the military observer team so that Zaire and Nigeria would produce 15 army officers each under the direct supervision of the OAU, which mandated Mobutu to help the two parties to solve the conflict through peaceful means.

The Rwandese Government delegation to the Gbadolite talks was led by the Rwandese ambassador to Uganda, Kanyarushoki Claver, while the FPR delegation was headed by Pasteur Bizimungu, the head of external relations in the FPR executive committee.

After an exchange of views by the two sides on various issues, Mobutu urged them to show greater mutual confidence during future meetings, whose dates have not yet been fixed, the press release said. Mobutu also asked them to study seriously the documents they exchanged so as to give appropriate replies to the basic questions at their next meeting.

Zaire

Further on Kinshasa Violence, Spreads to Shaba

Shots Heard at Kokolo Barracks

AB2309180491 Paris AFP in French 1143 GMT
23 Sep 91

[Text] Kinshasa [incomplete dateline as received]—Soldiers were indeed participating in looting shops in the commercial center of the city and were not in any way opposed to the civilians, the AFP correspondent noted. It was impossible to tell later in the morning if the "mutiny" that started in Ndjili had been followed by other barracks apart from Kokolo, from which violent shots had been heard.

Since early this morning shops were closed. Private companies and diplomatic missions sent their employees home. No law enforcement agencies, police, or other security forces (notably the civil guard) were visible in the streets of Kinshasa, which has been given up to the looters.

At 1200 local time (1100 GMT), the Zairian national radio had not mentioned these incidents and continued to broadcast music. On Boulevard du 30 June, the main street of Kinshasa, rioters marched in the morning brandishing the blue and red flag of the former Democratic Republic of Congo that existed before the establishment of the Second Republic under the name Republic of Zaire.

Order Restored at Airport 23 Sep

*EA2309184691 Bukavu Voix du Zaire in French
1630 GMT 23 Sep 91*

[Text] The situation is very tense in the capital. According to a government source in Kinshasa, soldiers of the Air Force Troops Training Center, CETA, occupied Ndjili International Airport since 0300 this morning.

The same source confirmed that the move followed the pay adjustment demanded by all the units of the Zairian Armed Forces. It is worth mentioning that since the [word indistinct] of the exchange rate, many consultations have been held between the government and social organizations with the aim of determining the guaranteed minimum wage. It is in this precise context that we should place the proceedings of the National Labor Council whose social session is going on in Kinshasa. The consultations should inspire pay adjustments for civil servants and servicemen. The adjustments were due to be released by the end of the week.

It is worth noting that this morning's move resulted in looting of several shopping centers in Kinshasa, including the (Offida) depots at Ndjili Airport, which resulted in the disruption of air travel. The same government source said that since 0930 this morning, Ndjili International Airport has been controlled by elements of the regular forces which are currently restoring order by ejecting the looters. In any case, the situation is returning to normal.

No precise account has yet reached OZRT [Zaire Television and Radio] in Kinshasa, but the situation is calm in the country, according to the same source. This source condemns everyone who incited our compatriots, including the Army, to violence, while calls for calm were launched by the government and churches, appealing for peace during this period of the national sovereign conference, which will result in final guidelines for the good future of our country.

Armed Forces Head: Order Restored

*AB2409083091 Paris AFP in English 2215 GMT
23 Sep 91*

[Text] Kinshasa, Sept 23 (AFP)—Riots broke out in the Zairean capital early Monday [23 September] after soldiers angry about their low pay went on a looting rampage and sacked hundreds of stores in the centre of the city.

Armed Forces Chief of Staff Mandzengue Mayibandza said on Zaire radio late Monday that order had been restored in the capital after the "devastation and disaster."

Automatic weapons fire and hand grenade explosions had resounded in various districts, but died down in the afternoon when calm returned to most parts of the city of four million people.

Eyewitnesses to the shooting said soldiers were firing rounds into the air or at locks of stores they intended to loot.

Civilians joined in the looting, and police appeared to be absent from the scene. Stores and offices closed, public transport stopped and embassies sent staff home as soon as the trouble began.

As dusk fell, streets strewn with boxes and rubbish gradually emptied of people as the last looters went home. Shop windows had been smashed and security gates forced throughout the business district.

(In Brussels, a Belgian Foreign Ministry spokesman said that the homes of Belgians living in Kinshasa and a Belgian-run school had also come under attack.)

(The spokesman said the school was evacuated as soon as the looting began, and that the ministry had received no reports of any casualties.)

The disturbances began after troops, who had not received expected pay rises on Friday [20 September], mutinied at an army training camp near the international airport at Kinshasa-Njili, 40 kilometres (25 miles) outside the city.

The airport was closed overnight after soldiers entered its grounds, looted customs warehouses and destroyed buildings, Zaire radio reported.

The trouble then spread to other barracks in the capital.

At one point in the morning, people marched down the city's main street waving the blue and red flag of the former Belgian Congo. The country gained independence in 1960, and changed its name to Zaire in 1971.

The national news agency AZAP said the situation was "under control" at the airport and in most other parts of the capital, and that the rest of the country was calm.

However, the airport was still closed to air traffic late Monday, a reliable source said. The Belgian airline

Sabena said three of its planes bound for Kinshasa were diverted to Brazzaville in neighboring Congo on Monday.

In his radio broadcast, General Mayibandza appealed to soldiers to return to their units in a disciplined fashion. He assured them their officers would be conveying to them "the government's solutions to your worries."

He said that elements "hostile" to Zaire had whipped up the disturbances "just as we were getting ready to give you" those solutions.

There were conflicting reports about whether the soldiers had received their salary at all on Friday. AZAP said some of the soldiers had refused their pay because they had been expecting a salary increase, while Radio Zaire said they had not been paid at all.

The radio also said the soldiers were protesting against delays in negotiations with the government on bringing their salaries into line with civil servants' pay.

Civil servants have been on strike for three weeks pressing their own demands for higher pay.

The average monthly salary of a Zairean soldier is about 100,000 zaires (5.75 dollars), while a junior civil servant earns twice as much. Either salary buys nothing more than a sack of the staple starch, cassava.

(In Brussels, a meeting of the Belgian cabinet was called to discuss measures to protect the 10,500 Belgians who live in Zaire, a government spokesman said. Prime Minister Wilfried Martens cancelled previous engagements to monitor the situation.)

(In Paris, the French Government said the riots underscored the need for Zaire "to pursue in a resolute manner" the process of reform and democratization. About 4,000 French citizens live in Zaire, most of them in Kinshasa.)

France Takes Measures

LD2409001891 Paris Radio France International
in French 1830 GMT 23 Sep 91

[Interview with French Ambassador to Zaire Henri Rethore by correspondent Ghislaine Dupont on Zairian unrest in Kinshasa on 23 September—recorded]

[Excerpts] The French Foreign Ministry said incidents in Kinshasa today by soldiers discontented with their pay show the need to continue the democratization process. The French Government adds that it has taken preliminary measures to ensure the safety of its citizens in the Zairian capital; reportedly, they have been advised to remain at home.

As you will hear, Mr. Rethore, the French ambassador in Kinshasa, does not speak of mediation, but he acknowledges, nevertheless, that contact has been made with the authorities to maintain the dialogue between the soldiers and their superiors:

[Begin recording] [Rethore] In view of our means of communication, we have, above all, served as a go-between to put the members of the 31st paratroop brigade in touch with authorities, with whom contact was broken, so that measures could be taken during the day to come up with the pay that was expected. I believe that this objective has been achieved.

[Dupont] Does this brigade have contacts with the French military cooperation workers?

[Rethore] This brigade had cooperation workers, who are just instructors and have no supervisory capacity. They are instructors who basically teach them parachute jumping. [passage omitted]

[Dupont] Do you think that if the unrest continues, President Mobutu could take measures, such as decreeing a state of emergency?

[Rethore] I do not know; I really cannot answer your question. It is very difficult to get in touch with the Zairian authorities today, much less with President Mobutu, who is some 50 km from Kinshasa. [end recording]

'Systematic' Looting Continues 24 Sep

AB2409084391 Paris AFP in French 0750 GMT
24 Sep 91

[Text] Brazzaville, 24 Sep (AFP)—"Systematic" looting continued in Kinshasa this morning where civilians joined soldiers in emptying several shops, Radio Zaire monitored in Brazzaville announced this morning.

Gunshots could still be heard in certain wards of the capital, the radio added. A military commentator, Lieutenant Rozoungou Mouanda, said that the Army chief of staff's appeal to soldiers yesterday evening to return to their barracks was not heeded.

One may recall that General Mandzengue Mayibandza, yesterday evening, appealed to the soldiers to return to their barracks in "order and discipline," to enable their supervisors to inform them about new government decisions concerning them.

Air traffic is still closed due to the closure of Ndjili, Kinshasa, Airport which was reportedly retaken by regular forces after its control yesterday morning by the mutineers. The river link between the Zairian and Congolese capitals is still interrupted.

French Troops Take Over Airport

AB2409100891 Paris AFP in English 0946 GMT
24 Sep 91

[Excerpts] Brazzaville, Sep 24 (AFP)—French and Belgian troops were preparing Tuesday to evacuate foreign residents from Zaire where a day-old Army mutiny appeared to be winning wider support.

A company of French troops took over Kinshasa's international airport, Ndjili, on Tuesday and about 100 French paratroopers crossed into Kinshasa by boat from here, informed sources said in Paris. [passage omitted]

The French paratroops arrived overnight in Brazzaville apparently from bases in Central African Republic and were ferried across the Congo (Zaire) River Tuesday to Kinshasa—a distance of some 500 meters (yards).

Quoting a reliable source, the Flemish language radio BRT said Belgian troops were also on the way to Zaire to take part in a security operation in cooperation with U.S. and French troops.

The Kinshasa base of the medical charity Medecins Sans Frontieres [MSF] questioned by phone told BRT that sporadic shooting was going on in Kinshasa but no serious violence. An MSF spokesman said several Belgian families had been evacuated but were thus far unable to leave the country.

According to the Belgian daily LE SOIR, 2,000 Belgian paratroops have been standing by for at least two weeks and were ready to leave for Zaire within two hours of receiving the order. LE SOIR said the plan involved flying the troops to Zaire aboard U.S. C-141 aircraft based at Stuttgart in Germany.

Under a recently updated plan first drawn up 30 years ago, Belgian nationals could be evacuated via Brazzaville or Kigali in neighbouring Rwanda.

French Troops Head for Kinshasa

*AB2409111991 Paris AFP in French 1033 GMT
24 Sep 91*

[Text] Kinshasa, 23 Sep (AFP)—French troops were advancing into Kinshasa by 1000 today, an AFP correspondent learned from reliable sources from private shortwave radio stations. According to these reports, a convoy of troops coming from Kinshasa-Ndjili Airport, now under the control of Zairian regular forces and French soldiers, was heading for the center of town, about 40 kms away. These troops joined up with French troops which had come in from Brazzaville, on the other side of the river, in Limete, in the Kinshasa industrial area.

Clashes Reported in Shaba Region

*AB2409092991 Paris AFP in French 0821 GMT
24 Sep 91*

[Text] Brussels, 24 Sep (AFP)—Clashes occurred between Zairian soldiers in Kolwezi, Shaba Region, southeastern Zaire, where gunshots were heard, a Belgian Foreign Ministry spokesman stated today. A group comprising dozens of Belgians has left Shaba mining town for neighboring Zimbabwe, the spokesman added. According to the Belgian news agency, BELGA, this group is made up of 80 women and children. The riots sparked off by soldiers were hitherto limited to Kinshasa, according to Zairian officials.

Evacuation of Belgian Citizens Begins

*LD2409112291 Brussels BRT International
in French 0930 GMT 24 Sep 91*

[Excerpts] It is naturally the situation in Zaire that is the lead news item today. A further meeting between Belgian Prime Minister Wilfried Martens and his senior ministers took place this morning to discuss the situation in Zaire and that of our citizens in particular.

We have just learned furthermore from reliable sources that the evacuation of Belgians has been launched. C-130 planes left last night to make it possible to speed up the evacuation of all Belgians in Zaire if necessary. We do not yet know where the Belgian planes will land, in view of the fact that security at Zairean airports is not guaranteed. The C-130's will no doubt land at Brazzaville, on the opposite bank of the Congo River. We have moreover just learned that around 100 Belgian paratroopers are due to fly to Zaire very shortly. A military operation could no doubt take place with extensive participation by the French troops based in Kigali, Rwanda. [passage omitted]

At the present time it is difficult to say what exactly is happening in Kinshasa. The looting is continuing, according to reports, and is being carried out not only by soldiers but also by the civilian population. Belgians have been evacuated to safe places. The looting was not restricted to shops and supermarkets yesterday, but also took place in the homes of foreign citizens, including Belgians. [passage omitted]

The representatives in Libreville of several Zairean opposition parties have launched a call for the bloody and macabre dictatorship of Mr. Mobutu to be swept away—I quote. This motion is signed by the Union for Democracy and Social Progress, the Lumumba United Party, and the Zairean Socialist Union.

French Minister: Lifting Sanctions To Begin

MB2309203691 Johannesburg South African
Broadcasting Corporation Network in English
1845 GMT 23 Sep 91

[Text] The French minister of industry and foreign trade, Mr. Dominique Strauss-Kahn, says that France will systematically begin lifting the last remaining boycott against South Africa—the ban on coal—once the democratic process in South Africa is completed. He said at a news conference after talks in Pretoria with the state president, Mr. F. W. de Klerk, that France welcomed the reforms that had already taken place in South Africa. Because of this it had been decided to renew certain political, and economic ties with South Africa, particularly trade links.

Mr. de Klerk said he believed that it had been to France's detriment to maintain a coal boycott against South Africa. He said he was convinced that Mr. Strauss-Kahn's visit to South Africa would lead to an expansion of joint business ventures between the two countries.

Earlier, Mr. Strauss-Kahn announced at a news conference in Johannesburg that the South African mining group, Genmin, had been granted the right, in collaboration with the French partner, the BRGM [Geological and Mining Research Bureau] group, to prospect for and mine gold in French Guyana. The two groups will be equal partners in the company that will mine ore deposits. The BRGM group will be responsible for the exploration phase which will begin before the end of this year.

ANC's Mbeki Comments

MB2309202891 Johannesburg SAPA in English
1938 GMT 23 Sep 91

[Text] Johannesburg Sept 23 SAPA—Foreign businessmen and governments interested in investing in a future democratic South Africa can start making preparations now, according to the ANC's [African National Congress] international affairs director, Mr Thabo Mbeki.

Speaking at a press conference after top ANC leaders held a meeting with French Industry and Trade Minister Dominique Strauss-Kahn and his delegation in Johannesburg on Monday, Mr Mbeki said the ANC's position on sanctions remained unchanged.

He said the organisation's national congress in Durban in July had decided in favour of a phased lifting of sanctions in response to political progress made in the country, and nothing had changed since then.

However, countries which wanted to invest in a future democratic South Africa had to start making preparations now.

"There is a delay between a decision to invest and the actual investment taking place. Nobody can take the decision to invest in South Africa today and invest tomorrow.

"We will come to the point when it will be agreed that the ban on investment will be lifted, but it is important that countries interested in investing in South Africa start making preparations now," said Mr Mbeki.

Mr Mbeki was a member of an ANC delegation which held talks with Mr Strauss-Kahn and his delegation of French MP's [members of parliament] and businessmen on Monday, the last day of the French party's visit.

Leading the ANC delegation was the organisation's president, Mr Nelson Mandela, who had to leave before the meeting was over to attend "an unscheduled urgent meeting", according to Mr Mbeki.

Also in the delegation was ANC National Chairman Mr Oliver Tambo.

Mr Strauss-Kahn said the hour-long meeting was "informative and emotional", and his government undertook to help train black South Africans in preparation for senior jobs in future. He said preparations made towards investment now could lead to actual investment about 18 months later.

Mr Mbeki was optimistic that the democratic process would succeed in the country, saying the democratic movement in South Africa was strong enough to "make these things happen". He hoped a multi-party conference would be held before the end of the year.

The ANC international affairs director said an interim government which would be set up in the country would be faced with "a series of demands from the people", and the interim government would therefore need financial help to deal with these problems.

Before the meeting with the French delegation, the ANC leaders hosted a group of five Danish parliamentarians.

Finance Minister Announces VAT Concessions

MB2409080991 Johannesburg South African
Broadcasting Corporation Network in English
0500 GMT 24 Sep 91

[Text] Finance Minister Barend du Plessis has announced that in reaction to protests about VAT [Value-Added Tax] from the medical, dental, and pharmaceutical professions, the limit has been raised on taxable services provided below which a small business may choose to do its accounting on a VAT payment base.

The limit on taxable services provided has been increased from 1 million rands to 2.5 million rands, allowing many more small businesses to qualify for this concession. Businesses that have already registered for VAT but qualify for the VAT payment base under the new limit should apply to the receiver of revenue.

Possible Trade Federation Boycott Over VAT

*MB2409121791 Johannesburg South African
Broadcasting Corporation Network in Afrikaans
1800 GMT 23 Sep 91*

[Text] The ANC [African National Congress] says the government is heading toward confrontation if Value-Added Tax, VAT, is implemented in its present form at the end of this month.

ANC Secretary General Cyril Ramaphosa addressed the coordinating committee a pressure group representing 93 organizations, about its demands and dissatisfaction regarding the new tax form. A delegation of the committee will meet the state president tomorrow.

[Begin Ramaphosa video recording in English] This is a clear indication that the South African Government, by implementing this tax is actually making a mockery of the whole negotiation process. To add insult to injury we found that the South African Government has a hidden agenda with regard to this tax, which is, to begin the process of reconstructing and restructuring our economy. And it is doing so through the back door. [end recording]

Mr. Ramaphosa's statement follows a meeting of the pressure group held last week with Finance Minister Du Plessis. None of the demands were met at the meeting and Mr. du Plessis stated very clearly that nothing could be done to change this taxation system. Instead, he announced subsidies on certain basic foods. The committee will present the same demands to the state president tomorrow.

If the meeting with the state president does not change the status quo, then the country's two biggest trade federations will consult their more than two million members to stage a countrywide boycott in November.

[Begin video recording in English] [Jay Naidoo, president of the Congress of South African Trade Unions] On one hand we are committed to seeking a consensus based on negotiations while at the same time we are committed to taking actions to pursue those objectives, particularly relating to the zero rating of basic foodstuffs, medical services, electricity and water and proper consultation and negotiation on poverty relief programs and concessions to small business. [end recording]

Salaried Staff Group Against Boycott

*MB2409075791 Johannesburg South African
Broadcasting Corporation Network in English
0500 GMT 24 Sep 91*

[Text] The Federation of Salaried Staff Associations of South Africa has condemned threats of a general countrywide strike raised at a meeting of the coordinating committee on VAT [Value-Added Tax] yesterday.

And in another development, the National Consumer Union has decided to reconsider its membership of the committee. A consumer union official said this was

being done because of the threat of a general strike if today's high level talks failed to resolve the crisis.

ANC Calls for Release of Political Prisoners

*MB2409070891 Johannesburg SAPA in English
2202 GMT 23 Sep 91*

[Text] Johannesburg Sept 23 SAPA—The African National Congress (ANC) says President F W de Klerk should demonstrate his good faith and release all remaining "political prisoners" as agreed to in terms of the Pretoria Minute.

The prisoners' incarceration and continuing trials were a fundamental obstacle to negotiations, the ANC said on Monday in a statement released by its Department of Information and Publicity.

"It is within State President De Klerk's power to release the remaining political prisoners tomorrow if he chooses to do so.

"To date, over a year past the signing of this agreement (the Pretoria Minute), members of Umkhonto we Sizwe [Spear of the Nation, MK], like Robert McBride, remain in prison.

"Others, like Comrades Mthetheli Mncube and Mzondelell Nondula, are still on death row.

"We signed this agreement (Pretoria Minute) in good faith, and we are having that faith severely tested," the statement said.

"The Harare Declaration stated quite clearly that the release of all prisoners is a precondition for full constitutional negotiations."

The ANC could not understand how MK members charged with offences "identical to those of Comrade McBride, for example comrades Steven Maboia and Mandla Villkazi, have been released".

"There is no issue of principle involved in the continued incarceration of Robert McBride."

He was in prison "as a result of his activities on behalf of Umkhonto we Sizwe".

"At all times, without exception, he carried out the instructions of his military commanders in the ANC," the statement said.

ANC Military Wing To Be Future RSA Army

*MB2309180691 Johannesburg South African
Broadcasting Corporation Network in English
0500 GMT 23 Sep 91*

[Text] The head of the ANC's [African National Congress] Welfare Department, Mrs. Winnie Mandela, says the ANC's military wing Umkhonto we Sizwe [Spear of the Nation] will be the future Army of a democratic South Africa [RSA].

Mrs. Mandela told an ANC Women's League rally near Tzaneen that, despite the signing of the peace accord recently, the military wing would not be disbanded and that recruiting would be increased. The ANC said last week that recruiting in South Africa would be stopped, but that training at bases outside this country would continue.

Reacting to Mrs. Mandela's statement the deputy minister of defense, Mr. Wynand Breytenbach, said the ANC wanted to convince its supporters that its position was not weakening. That was the reason why Mrs. Mandela tried to create the impression that the defense force and Umkhonto [Umkhonto we Sizwe] would merge.

ANC Youth League Leader Found Dead in Soweto

*MB2309191891 Johannesburg SAPA in English
1504 GMT 23 Sep 91*

[Text] Johannesburg Sept 23 SAPA—A leader of the African National Congress Youth League (ANCYL), Mr John Papo Manyakalle, was found dead in the toilet of his Diepkloof, Soweto, home with a gun and a bullet casing next to his body, the organisation said on Monday.

ANCYL official Vuyani Mabaxa told SAPA the 21-year-old activist had been shot through the ear. He was found dead on Friday morning.

Police called to the scene said he had taken his own life, Mr Mabaxa said. However, the ANCYL said it suspected foul play.

Police spokesman Col Tienie Halgryn disputed the ANCYL claim, reiterating: "We suspect no foul play".

Two Incidents Reported in 23 Sep Unrest Report

*MB2409065391 Johannesburg SAPA in English
0523 GMT 24 Sep 91*

[Text] Pretoria Sept 24 SAPA—Herewith the official police unrest report for the 24 hours ended midnight on Monday:

"At Old Cross Roads, western Cape, two persons were injured when a group of blacks threw stones at a bus.

"At Alexandra, Sandton, police found the body of a black man with stab wounds."

CP Member Beyers To Begin 14-Day Prison Term

*MB2309175491 Johannesburg South African
Broadcasting Corporation Network in English
1600 GMT 23 Sep 91*

[Text] The general secretary of the Conservative Party (CP), Mr. Andries Beyers, has been ordered in the Supreme Court in Pretoria to report to prison within a week to start a 14-day jail sentence.

Earlier this year Mr. Beyers was sentenced in the Magistrate's Court in the city to 14 days imprisonment for

refusing to reveal the identity of his alleged source within the security services for claims he had made about the abduction of a witness in the Winnie Mandela kidnapping trial. Mr. Justice Van Dykhorst and Mr. Justice Roos rejected an appeal by Mr. Beyers against his conviction and sentence.

They said in their judgment that Mr. Beyers grounds for refusing to divulge the identity of his source were not sufficient to exonerate him from his duty to make it known. At his trial Mr. Beyers said he had promised his source he would not reveal his identity.

He said he feared that his source's information would dry up if he did not keep his promise. He said he also feared for the life of his source.

Department Reacts to Union Call on School Closure

*MB2409070491 Johannesburg SAPA in English
2125 GMT 23 Sep 91*

[Text] Johannesburg Sept 23 SAPA—The Department of Education and Training said on Monday the call by the SA [South African] Democratic Teachers Union [SADTU] for teachers not to close schools during the holidays was irresponsible.

"This call smacks of gross irresponsibility and provocation," said Mr R R Motau, Johannesburg regional chief director, in a statement.

"SADTU's call will be seen by many authorities as a smokescreen to cover up the neglect of duty in a wasted year," he said.

"There is a real risk of wholesale confrontation between SADTU and a community which views the defiance campaign as a deception," he added.

24 Sep Press Review on Current Events, Issues

MB2409103991

[Editorial Report]

THE CITIZEN

Paper Opposes Planned Antitax Strike—Referring to the controversy surrounding the implementation of the new value added tax, VAT, system, Johannesburg THE CITIZEN in English on 20 September in its page 6 editorial says: "Cosatu [Congress of South African Trade Unions] should think again about its campaign of industrial action and a general strike. The country's economy is in a poor enough state, with growing unemployment. Nothing should be done to weaken the economy any further. As for not paying VAT and other taxes, it is quite irresponsible. The money that comes from taxes goes to running the country and paying for schools, housing, social services, pensions and everything else

that the government provides. Not to pay taxes means there will be less money available for essential services."

THE STAR

Praise for Army Draft Conduct Code—Referring to the draft code of conduct for the South African Defense Force, SADF, Johannesburg THE STAR in English on 24 September in a page 22 editorial says "there is confusion over which parts of the draft document represent SADF thinking and which are merely ANC [African National Congress] proposals." "To be mesmerised by the emerging differences is to miss the essential point—that the very concept of such a code in itself represents a quantum leap away from racial divisiveness and towards true reconciliation. It should not be cause for concern that there remains some way to go before consensus is reached among former enemies, but rather of gladness that we have come so far, so fast. Disputed detail aside, the code is a reaffirmation of a fundamental principle that has taken a severe beating in South Africa's recent past. That principle holds that a nation's defence force must be representative and cannot serve sectarian purposes. It is likely this will be the cornerstone of the code, once the horsetrading is over."

Call for Joint ANC-Inkatha Renouncement of Violence—A second editorial on the same page commends King Goodwill Zwelithini and Inkatha President Mangosuthu Buthelezi for their "unequivocal support to the National Peace Accord." They exhorted 6,000 Zulus to honor the accord at a rally in the Natal south coast area over the weekend. "But to really consolidate the popular foundations of the accord it is high time that Chief Minister Buthelezi and ANC President Nelson Mandela fulfil their pledge—made in January, at the time of the ANC-Inkatha pact—to urge their supporters at a joint rally to end their internecine war. Until they do so, separate peace may be mere pious words."

BUSINESS DAY

Government Willingness To Negotiate Military Conduct Code—Johannesburg BUSINESS DAY in English on 24 September in a page 8 editorial believes it would be

"naïve to expect the former targets of the SADF to be willing to allow it to continue operating through the next few years of transition without any major adjustments. That the South African Government recognises this is reflected in its willingness to negotiate a code of conduct for the military." "The problem of the right-wing paramilitary forces is more difficult. They are becoming the guerrilla army of the future, and will have to be dealt with politically and judicially. In the meantime, every step towards a more peaceful political process makes a new South Africa that much more secure."

SOWETAN

Buthelezi's Strong Call for Peace Welcome—"In one of the strongest calls to peace thus far, Inkatha leader Dr. Mangosuthu Buthelezi urged his followers at the Shaka Day celebrations to stop political violence," notes the page 6 editorial in Johannesburg SOWETAN in English on 24 September. "We especially wish that this message will be heeded by middle leadership in Inkatha. They seemingly appear to be put under severe pressure and in panic send out dangerous and often unfortunate messages to grassroots followers."

SOUTH

Peace Initiatives Will Not End Violence—"Third force violence can clearly be turned on and off like a tap," announces a page 24 editorial in Cape Town SOUTH in English for 12-18 September. The paper notes the many investigations, commissions, and joint peace initiatives which "appear to pale in the face of sheer power and extent of the phenomenon of violence. It is too early to tell, but it is likely that not too much hope should be pinned on these initiatives. Because of the nature of the problem, their practical effectiveness is likely to be limited." But one has to see a "symbol value" in these peace initiatives in order to "keep hope alive."

New Nonracial Student Unity—A second editorial on the same page notes the "radical" change in the South African student movement. "The merger of black and white student bodies in the South African Students' Congress (Sasco) heralds a new and unprecedented non-racial unity."

Angola

Troops Move to Assembly Points in Benguela

*MB2309211291 Luanda Radio Nacional Network
in Portuguese 1900 GMT 23 Sep 91*

[Text] The last contingent of government troops stationed on the outskirts of Ganda and Caimbambo in Benguela Province moved to its assembly points. A military source contacted by a Radio Nacional correspondent in Cubal revealed that the confinement of government troops is being strictly observed, within the framework of the Angolan cease-fire accords. The source added that another FAPLA [People's Armed Forces for the Liberation of Angola] contingent stationed in Lomaum is on its way to an assembly point in Culango.

It will be noted that by early this month, FAPLA had already confined more than 2,000 soldiers in Culango, while UNITA [National Union for the Total Independence of Angola] had confined about 600 troops at Chingongo.

Charge Soldiers Fired at ANGOP Vehicle Denied

*MB2409081791 (Clandestine) Voice of Resistance
of the Black Cockerel in Portuguese to Southern
and Central Africa 0500 GMT 22 Sep 91*

[Text] Yesterday, the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola team within the Joint Political and Military Commission, CCPM, denied allegations made by ANGOP and the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola, MPLA, police concerning a shot allegedly fired by UNITA soldiers against an ANGOP vehicle.

This denial comes in a communique issued by the UNITA team to the CCPM. It blames the high levels of crime and delinquency in Luanda City on the unjust and dictatorial regime that Angola had to suffer for 16 years.

In that communique, the UNITA team to the CCPM called on the Angolan Government institutions to own up to their own errors.

UNITA Says Namibian Soldiers Infiltrate Namibe

*MB2409081591 (Clandestine) Voice of Resistance
of the Black Cockerel in Portuguese to Southern
and Central Africa 0500 GMT 24 Sep 91*

[Text] Mario Nelito, Voice of the Resistance of the Black Cockerel, Vorgan, correspondent for Mocamedes [Namibe] Province, reported today that large numbers of South-West African People's Organization, SWAPO, soldiers infiltrated that province.

Mario Nelito reports that the worrisome presence of those forces in Mocamedes is linked to the wave of disturbances promoted by the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola-Labor Party.

Mario Nelito says those SWAPO soldiers have infiltrated Mocamedes disguised as People's Armed Forces for the Liberation of Angola, FAPLA, soldiers. He adds that those forces are using the Ochicango and Ruacana routes to penetrate as deep as Lubango City in Angolan territory.

UNITA: Government Mobilizes People at Border

*MB2409125991 (Clandestine) Voice of Resistance
of the Black Cockerel in Portuguese to Southern
and Central Africa 0500 GMT 24 Sep 91*

[Text] Secret Ministry of State Security-Directorate of Intelligence and Security of Angola, Minse-DISA, agents have been carrying out an intensive campaign of popular mobilization along the Angola-Namibia border.

Americo Paulino, Voice of the Resistance of the Black Cockerel, Vorgan, correspondent for Cunene Province, quotes sources as saying that the campaign is aimed at instructing the people to cross the border en masse during the elections to vote for the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola, MPLA.

UNITA Detains Alleged FAPLA Spy

*MB2409080791 (Clandestine) Voice of Resistance
of the Black Cockerel in Portuguese to Southern
and Central Africa 0500 GMT 24 Sep 91*

[Text] The Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola, MPLA, violated the Angolan peace accords yet again. This time, it happened in the Chingongo area of Benguela Province.

Esperanca Carmelita, the correspondent of the Voice of the Resistance of the Black Cockerel in Benguela Province, reports that the Armed Forces for the Liberation of Angola, FALA, detected and detained Captain Joaquim Alfredo Quitumba, head of the People's Armed Forces for the Liberation of Angola, FAPLA, in Bocoio, when he tried to spy on the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola, UNITA, troop confinement area last week.

Esperanca Carmelita reports that FAPLA Captain Joaquim Quitumba, who had infiltrated a group of delegates of the AAA [German Agrarian Action] humanitarian organization, was wearing civilian clothes, carrying a Makarov pistol, and a military compass.

People Secure Catumbela Local Committee Building

*MB2409080191 (Clandestine) Voice of Resistance
of the Black Cockerel in Portuguese
to Southern and Central Africa 0500 GMT 24 Sep 91*

[Text] The people of Catumbela, in Benguela Province, removed the Minse-DISA [Ministry of State Security-Directorate of Intelligence and Security of Angola]

branch from the building UNITA [National Union for the Total Independence of Angola] bought for its local committee in 1975.

Our correspondent Ernesto Mulato reports that, after several frustrated attempts to find a house for the local UNITA committee through the Angolan Government housing authorities in Lobito, the people of Catumbela marched toward that building. The people searched the building and found 57 Soviet-made AK-47 weapons.

Ernesto Mulato reports that the people's action culminated in the hoisting of the UNITA flag, after a thorough clean-up operation in the building.

Malawi

President Discusses One-Party State at Convention

EA2309165191 Nairobi KNA in English 0935 GMT 23 Sep 91

[Text] Mzuzu (Malawi), 23d September (PANA/KNA)—President Kamuzu Banda of Malawi Sunday [22 September] in Mzuzu, northern Malawi, said his government did not impose a one-party state in the country but that the opposition were eliminated at the polling booths during general elections.

Opening this year's ruling Malawi Congress Party convention in Mzuzu, the president told delegates that his Malawi Congress Party became sole party by the will of the people. No one dictated it to them.

He said during the first elections in 1961 there were four political parties in the country. But after these elections, all the parties except the United Federal Party (UFP) (led by white settlers) died a natural death because they had no support from the people, he said.

He explained that after the elections only two parties were represented in Parliament, with the Congress as the majority party and the only party representing Africans in Parliament, while the United Federal Party represented the country's few white settlers.

In December 1963, the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland, which had Malawi, Zambia and Zimbabwe as one entity, was dissolved. Following the dissolution of the federation, the Malawi Congress Party swept all the seats in the 1964, general elections and this made Malawi a one-party state, the president told the delegates.

Commenting on the political changes taking place in the world today, among which were the unification of Germany, Banda said although communism was appealing to African political leaders, he said he had predicted that communism would fail because it was an unnatural system of government.

Defining economic policies under the socialism, the Malawi leader said every person is an individual and each individual needs incentives to work hard for his own personal gain other than to work (hard) for the lazy ones.

In Africa, he said, those who adapted a socialist system of government had now joined market system as Malawi was doing, because it was a national [as received] thing to do.

The president urged the convention delegates to look closely at his government's policies in the past 27 years, assess the situation and make recommendations for the future.

Opposition Head on Multiparty System Possibility

MB2309183491 London BBC World Service in English 1515 GMT 23 Sep 91

[Report on telephone interview with (Adam Vula), chairman of the United Front for Multiparty Democracy, by Robin White in Lusaka on the "Focus on Africa" program; date not given—recorded]

[Text] President Hastings Banda has opened the door [words indistinct] slightly on the possibility of political pluralism in Malawi. At present, the Malawi Congress Party is the only legal political party. But at the party's annual convention, President Banda said Malawians should feel free to discuss multiparty politics. In the past, the Malawi Government has been accused of responsibility for the deaths of members of exiled opposition political parties. Last month, those parties formed an alliance called the United Front for Multiparty Democracy, calling for Banda's resignation and free elections. On the line to Lusaka, Robin White asked Adam Vula, the front's interim chairman what he made of the president's remarks:

[Begin recording] [Vula] Well, actually what he said, we don't make anything really. We don't think he is serious. Had he been serious, then, he should have declared openly that Malawi is now a multiparty state, not a single-party state.

[White] So, what do you specifically want him to say?

[Vula] One, we want him to declare openly that Malawi is now a multiparty state, not a single-party state, as he did declare in 1966. He should nullify his declaration of 1966. Secondly, he should declare general amnesty of all Malawian political prisoners who are languishing in jails in Malawi. Three, he must declare that all the people in exile are free to return home and participate in the new process.

[White] So, you don't feel free to go home yourself?

[Vula] No, I can't ... [changes thought] We can't go home because we are in exile and we are refugees. Unless, he is actually definite, clear-cut, then we can feel free. He hasn't (?spoken) anything about that.

[White] But now apparently he is saying that it is not illegal to form political parties?

[Vula] As he says, yes. Legally, it is not illegal. But in Malawi as it is, no one can come out and say: I am forming a party.

[White] When were you last at home yourself?

[Vula] 1964.

[White] So, it might have been that you could be a bit out of touch now. (?Many) things might really have changed and you don't know?

[Vula] Not quite. Zambia and Malawi, they share the same border. We share the same language. We have people almost every day from home coming to Zambia, almost everyday. As I am talking here, somebody [words indistinct] from home. As I am talking here, there is somebody going home today. I think we are quite in touch.

[White] And your information is what, that nothing has changed?

[Vula] So far, nothing has changed. People are still afraid of talking, since we left up to this time. If there will be any change at all, let us wait and see what Banda has declared now, if at all he has declared. [end recording]

Commentary Views Banda's Address to Convention

MB2309184691 Blantyre Malawi Broadcasting Corporation Network in English 1600 GMT 23 Sep 91

[Commentary: "Opening of This Year's Malawi Congress Party Convention"]

[Text] In his opening address to this year's Malawi Congress Party Convention being held in Mzuzu, his excellency, the life president, Ngwazi [Paramount] Dr. Kamuzu Banda, touched on a number of issues of national importance. Among the issues was the subject of genuine peace and calm, law and order that the country enjoys under the banner of the mighty Malawi Congress Party and the good relations existing between Malawi and her neighbors.

On the prevailing peace and calm, law and order, it can be stated without any reservations that the rapid economic and social development which the country has experienced since independence has come about because of the political tranquility existing in this country. This has come about because each individual is eager to forge ahead in the task of improving his life in an atmosphere devoid of political bickerings and tribal sentiments.

What is equally important to mention is that Malawians are interested in peace because of their deep love for their leader—the Ngwazi—because they know everything he does is meant first and foremost for the good of his people. It is because of this that Malawi, under the

leadership of his excellency, the life president, has seen a [word indistinct] peace in an increasing troubled and unstable Africa.

It is no exaggeration to say that some countries in Africa have never experienced genuine peace since they got their independence. For those who have experienced some resemblance of peace, the peace has actually been superficial. For all this, it is important that the Malawi nation should remain eternally indebted to the architect of the prevailing peace and calm, law and order, and this is no lesser person than his excellency, the life president.

Now, therefore, is the right time to devise ways and means of making sure that the fruits of independence we are now enjoying are not disrupted by misguided and ambitious individuals either within or (?abroad). When we are doing this, it is to give full support to the Malawi Congress Party by strictly observing the four cornerstones of unity, loyalty, obedience, and discipline upon which the government is founded. [sentence as heard] Let us not forget the major role the Malawi Congress has played and continues to play in changing the course of history of this country in the political, economic, and social fields.

Banda, Foreign Delegates Comment on Relations

MB2309181891 Blantyre Malawi Broadcasting Corporation Network in English 1600 GMT 23 Sep 91

[Report from the Mzuzu Convention Studios by Charles Chikapa]

[Text] His excellency, the life president, Ngwazi [Paramount] Dr. Kamuzu Banda, today received in audience foreign delegations to (?this year's) Malawi Congress Party [MCP] Convention in Mzuzu. The delegations, which called on the Ngwazi, were those from Tanzania, Zambia, Mozambique, Namibia, and the African National Congress, ANC, from South Africa.

Speaking when he received the Tanzanian delegation, the life president said he is happy that the delegations in the country will have a first hand impression of the development taking place in Malawi. The Ngwazi expressed the hope that the friendly relations that exist between Malawi and Tanzania will be further strengthened for the mutual benefit of the peoples of the two countries.

And speaking during the occasion, the leader of the Tanzanian delegation, Mr. (Josias Menje), thanked the MAP for inviting the Chama Cha Mapinduzi [Revolutionary Party] to the convention.

Speaking when the Zambian delegation called on him, the life president reiterated that the people of the two countries are one as they share a common ethnic origin.

For his part the leader of the Zambian delegation, Mr. Mwanga, wished the Malawi nation greater prosperity.

Receiving the Mozambican delegation, his excellency the life president said it was his hope that the visit to this country by the delegation will enable it to see how things are run in this country. He called for more closer cooperation between the two countries.

On his part, the leader of the Mozambican delegation, Mr. Alcido Nguenha, delivered a message of goodwill from President Chissano of Mozambique to the life president.

Also calling on the life president was a delegation from Namibia. Speaking during the occasion, the life president extended his greetings to President Sam Nujoma of SWAPO [South-West African People's Organization].

Speaking when he received the ANC delegation, the Ngwazi said he was happy that all parties in the conflict in South Africa have decided to sit down and discuss their problems. He noted that for the region to develop it needs peace, and, therefore, commended the parties in South Africa for their efforts in trying to resolve their problems through dialogue. He expressed the hope that the talks taking place in South Africa will bear fruit, and lead to a government acceptable to all South Africans.

Speaking at the same function, the leader of the ANC delegation, Mr. (Zwangile Dundiso), said the invitation for his party to attend the convention will help bring together the peoples of the two countries even closer.

Delegates to this year's MCP convention today began their deliberations centered on the speech delivered by his excellency, the life president when he opened the convention yesterday.

Speaking at the start of the discussions, the convention chairman, Honorable Stanford Demba, and the treasurer general of the MCP, Honorable John Tembo, urged the delegates to feel free in their deliberations. They said by discussing issues freely the delegates will be assisting in maintaining the party's strength.

In their speeches the delegates who spoke highlighted the various development projects that are taking place in their respective areas under the life president's wise leadership in such areas as health, education, and agriculture. They noted that this has been possible because the life president dropped the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland. The delegates noted that on the path leading to independence, parties which opposed the MCP were defeated at the polls. They said the MCP emerged victorious without a major challenge. To this effect the delegates said those who claim that the MCP imposed itself on the people do not understand the historical facts which led to a one-party system in this country. The delegates said under the MCP the country has developed beyond recognition.

On their part, (other) delegates noted that under the MCP the status of women has been raised in this country. They said the establishment of the Chitukuko Chama [Development by Malawi Women], in Malawi,

CCAM, under the Women's League, has further opened more avenues for women's participation in national development. The delegates also commended the important role the national adviser to CCAM, Mama C. Tamanda Kadzamira, played in the organization, and the country as a whole. They condemned the malicious allegations made against her in the foreign media, adding that the people of this country fully support the CCAM.

Mozambique

Renamo Reports Peace Talks To Resume in Rome
*LD2309203191 Lisbon RDP Antena 1 Radio Network
in Portuguese 2000 GMT 23 Sep 91*

[Excerpt] The next round of Mozambican peace talks will start next week. Manuel Frank, the Renamo representative in Portugal, said the eighth round of talks is expected to start on 4 or 5 October in Rome. Renamo reports that the Italian mediators wanted to meet Mozambican President Joaquim Chissano and Renamo leader Afonso Dhlakama separately prior to the eighth round of talks. Manuel Frank said today that the Italian mediators met Afonso Dhlakama over the weekend in a southern African country. He added that all issues related to the peace negotiations were broached. [passage omitted]

Renamo Recaptures Lalaua City 19 Sep
*MB2309204091 Maputo Radio Mozambique Network
in Portuguese 1900 GMT 23 Sep 91*

[Text] An official source told Radio Mozambique this evening that on 19 September Renamo [Mozambique National Resistance] retook the capital of Lalaua District in Nampula Province. The source added that there are no reports of victims because the capital of Lalaua District has been practically deserted since Renamo occupied the town for the first time three months ago. Renamo remained in the capital for more than a month.

A few days before retaking the town, Renamo had been regrouping in an area 20 km from the district.

Meanwhile, the source denied rumors that the Mongincual and Mecuburi Districts to the east and west of Nampula city, respectively, were in Renamo hands.

President Chissano Departs for Germany 23 Sep
*MB2409075591 Maputo Radio Mozambique Network
in Portuguese 0600 GMT 24 Sep 91*

[Excerpt] President Joaquim Chissano left Maputo last night for Germany to begin an official visit tomorrow at the invitation of Richard von Weizsacker, his German counterpart. [passage omitted]

Swaziland

Reporting on Tinkhundla Review Sessions Banned

MB2409072091 Mbabane THE TIMES OF
SWAZILAND in English 24 Sep 91 p 2

[Report by James Dlamini: "Banned, Review Meeting
Now Secret"]

[Text] The press has been banned from reporting on the
Tinkhundla [Council of Chiefs] Review Committee.

This blanket ban on press coverage of the committee
hearing which has been in progress for more than two
weeks was slapped on the press in Mbabane yesterday.

The shock announcement was made by the Principal
Secretary [PS] in the Ministry of Interior, Mr. Enos
Mavuso. The Ministry of Interior is also responsible for
information. Mr. Mavuso was accompanied by the
director of broadcasting and information, Mr. Abner
Tembe.

Mr. Tembe is also the government PRO [Public Rela-
tions Officer] who is responsible for screening Govern-
ment news before it is given to the press.

Asked who made this earth shattering decision, Mr.
Mavuso claimed that it had been made by the Govern-
ment Committee which was appointed earlier this year
to monitor Government news. The chairman of this
committee is the secretary to cabinet and head of the
civil service, Mr. Alphus Shabangu.

Mr. Mavuso did not say whether or not Mr. Shabangu
participated in the making of this shocking decision. The
press conference was held in the conference room of the
Ministry of Interior.

Before making the announcement, Mr. Mavuso and Mr.
Tembe kept the press waiting in the conference room
while they held a two-man meeting in the PS's office.

The meeting was very brief and Mr. Mavuso answered
questions very tersely. He emphasised that the matter
was not for discussion when he was asked questions. Mr.
Mavuso said the press would be told when to write about
the meetings, which, he said would be probably after the
whole exercise is over.

Before making the announcement, Mr. Mavuso thanked
Swazi TV and SBS [Swaziland Broadcasting Services] for
not reporting about the Tinkhundla in the first place.
The two broadcasting stations have not been covering
the proceedings since they started. Mr. Mavuso said the
two stations had been respecting an earlier directive. He
did not explain what directive was talking about and who
had issued it.

But THE TIMES received a mysterious phone call before
the Tinkhundla deliberations started, to the effect that

all news about the committee should first be passed
through Mr. Tembe who is effectively the government
censor.

The chairman of the Review Committee is Prince Masit-
sela who confronted a TIMES OF SWAZILAND
reporter last week about editorial comment which had
been written about the manner in which he had been
handling the meetings.

Paper Condemns Reporting Ban

MB2409072691 Mbabane THE TIMES OF
SWAZILAND in English 24 Sep 91 pp 1,24

["Comment": "Press Ban Sabotages King's Trip"]

[Text] This is indeed a sad day for Swaziland and its
peace loving people. Government officials are once again
attempting to interfere with the free flow of information.

The press and, effectively, the Swazi Nation is being
stifled by what is probably the most ridiculous edict of
our time.

The press has been banned from reporting on the
Tinkhundla [Council of Chiefs] Review Committee,
despite the fact that when His Majesty the King insti-
tuted the commission of enquiry into the Tinkhundla
system, expected it to be public. Anyway, that is what
Swazis do, as during the 'People's Parliament'. Since the
review began, the people have been freely expressing
their views on how they would like to be governed.

Now, someone hiding behind two innocent Government
officials, has banned all news of the Tinkhundla hear-
ings. We don't know what this whole rigmarole means.
Does this mean that someone with a hidden agenda does
not like what the people are saying? Does this mean that
someone has something to hide?

Who is it and what is it that this person, whoever it is
wants to hide from the people?

There is also another cloudy side to this whole thing. We
would have expected that any serious policy announce-
ment would be made by a political person...at the very
least, the Prime Minister...someone who can take polit-
ical responsibility. When two Government clerks are
suddenly made to make political announcements far
above their stations, we are left with only one conclu-
sion...that something is very wrong. If it was above
board, why then are members of the cabinet not afraid of
making the announcement themselves.

We regard announcements made by government clerks
to be meant for other government clerks...not the whole
Swazi Nation. Civil servants are there to carry out
Government policy...not to make it. We do not believe
that those two civil servants have the authority to muzzle
the press without even saying whose instructions they are
following; nor do we accept their flimsy reason. If the
influence of the press was to be avoided, why was it not
banned at Ludzidzini during the 'People's Parliament.'

It is doubtful that the decision comes from the Government. If it did, we would be shocked at this kind of political short-sightedness. How can anybody in his right senses decide to embarrass His Majesty the King in this way?

The Ngwenyama [lion, referring to the king] established this commission because he wanted to make it obvious that he does not want to take decisions without consulting his people. He commanded that the thing be public and not conducted in secret. But as soon as he turns his back, someone decides to reverse his instructions.

As we write, the King is away. He is meeting with peers and industrial leaders who place great value on assurances that modifications being planned for our system will ensure continued peace and stability. He has explained to many important people of the important national consultation currently taking place back home. Many more have been impressed at the democratic nature of the consultation, the openness and freedom in which people have expressed themselves.

Now someone has decided to place embarrassing impediments on the King's way.

Because we are not aware of any reason which made this necessary, we are left to wonder if this is not a deliberate attempt to embarrass and sabotage the King's trip to the United States. How is the King expected to answer if he is asked about this new attempt to violate human rights.

Simple people may see this only as an attempt to muzzle the press.

In fact, it is not that only. After the press is driven out, those who will attend the Review meetings will have to be careful of what they say, otherwise, they too may be strangled.

We can only associate this ridiculous state of affairs with the thinking of some of these yesterday's men whose influence seems to hold sway these days. We cannot help but recall that a member of the committee, the Minister of Justice Mr Zonke Khumalo cancelled his tour with the committee on Friday [20 September] in order to make an important announcement at his office. Apparently, he then thought better of it. Could this be what he wanted to say?

We cannot allow this to destabilize our people. That is why we challenge the Prime Minister to clarify this boggling issue (assuming he was consulted) and explain to the public what this whole thing is about.

In the meantime, we not only appeal to the committee not to be surprised when they see the press and read reports of their meetings, but we also demand that they make public their itinerary, giving dates and times when they would be visiting particular Tinkhundla so that people can make arrangements to exercise their rights to contribute their views.

It is the people who should speak freely, NOT the committee.

The press should be there, not only as a guarantee of freedom of expression, but also because the public has a RIGHT to know. That right cannot be taken by two clerks with an ownerless message.

END OF

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DATE FILMED

1 Oct 1991

